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COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

COMMITTEE ON
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SUBCOMMITTEES:

FEDERAL WORKFORCE, POSTAL SERVICE,
AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT, ORGANIZATION,
AND PROCUREMENT

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SUBCOMMITTEES:

TERRORISM, NONPROLIFERATION AND TRADE

MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

Congress of the United States
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Dear Mr. Catoe,

Thank you for your leadership during this winter's record-setting snowfall, which has created considerable challenges for Metro and the more than 700,000 regional commuters who rely on its bus and rail services each day. As you are well aware, having any portion of the Metro system operating below normal capacity can create havoc across the region's transportation network. Those challenges only become magnified during extreme weather events like the back-to-back snow storms experienced here in the National Capital Region recently.

With more than 40% of federal employees dependent on Metro to travel to and from work and with nearly half of all Metro stations located on federal property, the federal government has more than a passing interest in the safety and reliability of the Metro system. It has been well publicized that Metro rail cannot service above-ground stations when snow accumulation surpasses 8 inches, and Metro bus travel is limited by local road conditions. The decision to close federal agencies this week was influenced in part by Metro's limited service. Understandably, Metro itself faced challenges in deploying its own workforce to deal with the snowy conditions to allow for the buses and trains to operate even with limited service.

Through better understanding the challenges Metro faced in addressing the extreme weather conditions this week, we may be able to identify opportunities to better mitigate such conditions in the future and ensure the safe, reliable operation of Metro. To that end, I would appreciate if you could address a few questions on the subject:

1. What unique circumstances and challenges were created for Metro bus and rail systems by this week's snowfall?
2. What coordination is taking place between Metro and other regional leaders, particularly the federal government and the Office of Personnel Management, during such situations?
3. What additional capital or operational resources could help Metro more quickly recover from such extreme weather conditions? Specifically, could additional capital or operational resources allowed Metro to more quickly recover from recent snow storms?
4. Are there unmet recurring costs that need to be addressed to help Metro better prepare for such conditions?

Applying these lessons to subsequent storms or disasters could improve the ability of Metro to respond and recover more quickly and help the federal government and other regional employers maintain continuity of operations and reduce productivity losses associated with employees' inability to travel. I look forward to working with you as we continue to improve our region's transportation network.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gerald E. Connolly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "G" and "C".

Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress
11th District, Virginia